

A Survey for Family Members of Youth Mental Health Clients Regarding Personal Health Records (PHRs) that Include Both Physical and Mental Health Information

Tired of answering the same questions over and over again when receiving treatment services? Tired of the hassle of transferring health records from provider to provider when your child sees a specialist or a new treatment provider?

Most service providers keep your child's clinical records in paper files. Some providers keep them as computer files, which are called electronic health records (EHRs). Either way, each service provider organization keeps their own separate records about your child. It is sometimes a challenge to get your child's records quickly and safely transferred from one service provider to another so your child can get the well-coordinated services he or she needs.

The Personal Health Record (PHR) is one of the proposed solutions being considered for this and other types of needs. **The Personal Health Record or PHR is a secure electronic “place” you could use to gather the most important parts of your child's health and mental health records.** All the important parts of your child's health and mental health care information could be in one place—in his or her PHR, that you own and control, posted on a secure website. The privacy of your child's PHR would be protected with strict security so you could see it but no one else without your permission.

PHRs contain sensitive health care information and some people worry that their child's won't be well protected. Some want to have their child's information available and in their control to share with others, and some don't want to have that responsibility. Even though part of the cost of PHR services might be covered by some type of sponsoring organization, it is important to know if consumers and family members will really value and want to use those services.

Some of the ways you can use your child's PHR include:

For sharing information and communicating online with your child's service providers. You could allow your child's service providers to view only the parts of your child's record they need to coordinate your child's treatment. You could also email your child's service provider through your child's PHR if you had questions to ask. In a health care emergency you could enable the emergency room physician to quickly review parts of your child's PHR so he or she could immediately provide your child with proper care.

For your own private use. You could review parts of your child's record whenever you want. If you wanted, you could keep a record of your child's progress in treatment and how you felt about it. You could enter questions you want to ask your child's service provider and record the replies .

For sharing with family or close friends. You could use your child's PHR to share some information about his or her health and related services with close family or friends who help you and your child.

Some people use PHRs now, and many more are expected to use them soon, so we need to find ways to make them easily available and safe to use. Your responses will assist in determining the guidelines for PHR development. This survey is anonymous and voluntary. Neither you or your child's identity nor the services you or your child receive are connected with your responses. **Please take this survey online or send it back to us so we receive it no later than March 15th.**